3) Pointing of the teeth (Ku hleta).

304 881 This custom is also dying out. It used to be incumbent on all the girls. Now many do not observe it. They have seen that teeth deformed in this way decay more quickly. The operation is performed on the incisors, and girls must keep their mouths closed for two or three days, not showing their teeth to anybody.

Near Rikatla, the hleta custom was still in force in the heathen villages in 1910. It gives the girls a kind of canine aspect.

4) The milebe custom.

304 881 832 171 This is very wide-spread all over South Africa. Though it has disappeared now amongst most of the Ronga clans, it is still practised in the Manyisa country, over the whole of Bilen and in the Northern clans, amongst the Zulus, the Pedi-Suthos, etc. It is probably the origin of the famous "Hottentot apron," which some ethnographers thought to be a congenital malformation, and which is merely the result of this custom (Annotatio 5)[1]. It is a very ugly habit, very immoral from our point of view, fixing the imagination of the girl on sexual relations, but amongst the Thongas it is upheld as being quite the right thing.

B. MARRIAGE AND CONJUGAL LIFE

1) Conditions of Marriage

581 832 In the primitive Bantu tribe every girl gets married, some, however, sooner than others. Suitors prefer pretty girls to ugly ones! But what is their standard of beauty ? The ideal is tall stature, strong limbs and well developed breasts. A proverb

1 [See p. 517 in these categories or in the Analysis]

524 protect himself. He tries to close the access to his position by drawing the line *f*, *g*. But, arrived at *g*, he comes to the end of his saliva (a helela), and A. who started at *h*, having arrived at *i*, turns round the point *g*, where his enemy has stopped miserably, and, going on, *j*, *k*, reaches the opening *d* and triumphantly ends his campaign in e!

But E. of the opposite camp has noticed a gate in the barrier X. Q. The saliva has dried there. He quickly carries his blow-pipe across the battle field, squirting all the time, and passes through the opening Y. He draws the line *l*, *m*, *n*, *o* and so destroys the part Q. Y. of the fortification X. Q. Should B. be quick enough, he might prevent him accomplishing his plan by drawing the line *p*, *q*... And so on! Young men, even men of ripe age, take an immense delight in these saliva battles. But the saliva must be blackish... It must be *ntjutju* saliva, viz., saliva produced by hemp, and not the ordinary white saliva, called *matjafula*. Should one of the players try to supplement the blackish by the white, he would be disqualified... His enemy would seize him by the forehead, and force him to lift his head and stop his attack. Should he go on, however, the other would say: "What? You come to me with matjafula!" This may lead to quarrels, even to blows... The hemp-pipe falls down and it all ends in cordial laughter.

276 861 789 This hemp-smoking custom becomes a passion with many young men. To cure them their parents break the pipe, take a little of the soot which is found inside, and mix it with their food without their being aware of it. When this has been done three times, it is said to fill them with disgust for hemp... Similia similibus curantur... We shall often meet with this medical principle in the Thonga superstitions.

524 171 The most interesting game played by men, a game which fascinates them and which is certainly more refined than hemp-smoking, is the *tshuba*. It is at the same time one of the most widespread games of mankind. Mr. Stewart Culin says, in the Report of the Smithsonian Institute for 1893 and 1894, that it is played under the same name by the American Negroes, and that it is but a variety of the *mancala*, the national game of Africa,

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which is found in many other countries, Ceylon, Indo-China, Bombay, Java, Jerusalem, Liberia, Abyssinia, Cairo, Gabon, Angola and amongst the Central African tribes. From the ethnographic point of view and for purposes of comparison it is, therefore, very interesting to note its rules all over the world.

524

I tried (and I think successfully), to discover those of the Thongas, which at first seemed to me incomprehensible. The accompany-

Phot. A. Burt

Men playing tshuba naer Rikatla.

ing illustration will help to explain them. The apparatus required is most simple. Let us imagine it played in its most elementary form, when two men only are engaged in it. Each of them digs two rows of four little holes, behind which he squats. They face each other. So there will be sixteen holes, eight belonging to *A* and eight to *B*. In each hole they put two stones, either real stones or fruit stones. Those of the kanye fruit are mostly used, but, by preference, Natives play with the pretty shining grey seeds of a shrub found near the sea, which resemble the marbles used by European boys.

No. I shows two players ready to commence, with the sixteen

551 618 576 edged sword which "cuts" disputes brought to the capital. (The Khosa chiefs were reputed for their wisdom in deciding judicial or political matters.)

Hlabi: Ba Nhlabi ba ku bengwa, Nhlabi ya Makamu ya Mavuse ya nkoñwana, — The Hlabi who are hated, sons of Makamu, of Mavuse, of the calf (?)

Hlengwe: Shikobela sha Matsheme, Tshauke wa Matsheme (names of old chiefs).

551 618 643 576 *Tembe*: Mulao Ngolanyama madlaya a nga di, makhama a nga di, a dlayele bahloti: — Mulao (son of Tembe ?), the lion which kills and does not eat, the hawk which kills, it kills for the hunters, viz., it is so well fed itself, so rich that it can leave the meat for others. Such a sentence was pronounced in former times by subjects entering the royal kraal, crawling on their knees, when they wished to receive food from the chief.

Nhlanganu: Ba ku hlomula fumo, ba renga ndlela: — Those who unsheath the sword in order to buy the road, (the right of passing through a foreign country) (1).

551 In addition to these laudatory phrases of clans, each individual has his own sentence or sentences by which he praises himself or by which others praise his qualities. They are specially common in the case of boys, but even girls possess them. In the case of chiefs, such praises are much longer. See for instance the praise of the Nkuna chief Muhlaba (Part III, Ch. III, III).

* * *

171 If we cross the plain of the Sabi and reach the Drakensberg, we find that all the Pedi tribes dwelling together with the Thongas in the Leydenburg and Zoutpansberg district, possess laudatory

551 609 (1) This custom of praising the various tribes in such terms is so familiar to the Thongas that they have invented similar expressions for the white people. The Portuguese are: Ba ka nâofazmalo, — the Sons of Never mind, because they seem to the Natives to be somewhat careless or indifferent. The English are: Bana ba Nhluleki, a hluleka ku hleka, a tiba ku lwa, — the sons of the one who cannot, he cannot laugh, he knows how to fight! Perhaps Natives consider them, on the contrary, somewhat too earnest, too keen!

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names which they also call *seboko*, the same word as shibongo ; but most of these names are names of animals, and are called by the technical term *muthupu*, totem ; the animal is the emblem or totem of the group. The Pedi clans are totemic. This means that, not only do they glorify themselves by comparing themselves with an animal and taking its name, but they think that there is a mysterious vital connection between it and their social group. I cannot give here all the facts I collected amongst them on the subject. They were published in *Le Globe*, the organ of the Geneva Geographical Society, Volume LXIII, under the following title : *Le Totemisme chez les Thongas, les Pédis et les Vendas*. Let me merely mention the following details. The Khahas of the Shiluvane valley have the small grey antelope, called duyker, as totem. They salute each other in these words : "Goni! Phudi!" *Goni* is probably the name of an old ancestor, the same as Nkuna for the Ba-Nkuna ; but *phudi* means duyker. They consider it taboo to make a *ntehe* of its skin for their children. Some of them do not eat the flesh of that antelope, fearing that their children would become idiotic, or be covered with boils. They will not sit near a man of another clan who is handling the skin of a duyker. The Mashilas (Sekukuni's people), who have the porcupine as totem, say : "It is taboo even to tread on its dung ; the soles of the feet would become sore." Many clans are afraid to kill the animal which is their totem ; this is not a law enforced by the chiefs ; the totem itself punishes them if they trangress it. However, nowhere did I find the idea that they are descended from the totem. They say : "The old people noticed that the flesh of such and such an animal made the people of their clan ill ; so they proclaimed it taboo." Amongst the Vendas, or at any rate amongst certain Venda clans (Ba-Laudzi, Ba-Ngwe, Ba-Shidzibe) the totem is connected with the ancestor-gods. At his death, each member of the clan is transformed into the animal venerated by his clan and joins his congeners in the sacred wood where they live.

Nothing of this kind is met with amongst the Thongas. The Thonga clans are *atotemic*. Many men bear the name of animals, but this is merely a means of glorifying themselves ; there is no taboo with regard to the flesh, skin, or dung of that animal. I have

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643 their own saliva," (viz., their mouths watering the while). He sometimes throws a piece of meat to one of his favourites, who accepts it with both hands, shouting: "Bayete!" In the Tembe capital, men crawled on their knees before the chief, shouting: "Ngolanyama" "Lion!". Ñwangundjuwana, the chief of Ñwamba, was known for his more democratic ways. He used to eat with his men.

To shake hands with a chief was also considered as taboo before the days of Christianity. Now Muhlaba somewhat reluctantly accepts the hand which is extended to him by the most modest of his subjects, even by children on Christmas Day. The idea which is at the bottom of the fear is that the chief is a magical being. He possesses special medicines with which he rubs himself or which he swallows, so that his body is taboo (ntjumbu wa hosi wa yila). He is dangerous. "When he points at you with his finger, you are a dead man" (Mboza). Owing to the charms with which he had smeared his body, Maphunga, the chief of Nondwane, made those who discussed State affairs with him, even White people, "unable to answer him or to resist his will" (Mboza). In order to increase this salutary fear, some 643 171 chiefs had the curious custom of *disappearing for a time* (tumba) "just like a big caterpillar when it enters the ground and becomes a chrysalis." The same Maphunga used to remain invisible during one week each year before the great bukanye feast (1). We shall see the same rite practised by the great magicians, who also aspire to create a deep impression on the imagination of the people. (See Part VI.) As already mentioned, 643 the chief alone must be addressed by the royal salutation "Bayete" 576 or "Baheti." The hosana has no right to it legally, and must be addressed by the term "Baba," "Father." As regards subjects, they are called *malandja*, from the verb ku landja,

(1) This custom is met with amongst the Pedis, where old chiefs abandon their kraals and go to live in the desert for years, leaving a prince regent in their stead. This kind of hermit life gives them great prestige. The Pedi chief Sikororo, near Shiluvane, is the best-known case of such a disappearance. Sexual continence, even repugnance to women, was one of his reasons for this seclusion, which lasted until his death. (1903 or 1904).

643 to follow, the followers. The Chief is the one who walks in front, whom the malandja, the ordinary folk, follow from motives of submission and fidelity, much as a dog follows his master from attachment, but is ready to fight for him should occasion arise.

643 551 The *name of the chief* must not be pronounced on any and every occasion. Should it contain a word which designates another object, the name of this object must be changed. So the Mpfumu chief *Ñwamantibyane* felt that his name was too similar to *ntibu* (diminutive *ntibyane*),a certain antelope. It was henceforth taboo to call this animal ntibu in his territory. It had to be called nguya. Zihlahla, the father of Ñwamantibyane, had gone even further than his son ; his counsellors complained that he gave them no meat to eat, keeping all for himself. "He is a dog," they said. The chief overheard the remark and took action in the following decree : "Let it be know all over the country that *mbyana*, the dog, is I. When you pronounce this word, you will be referring to your chief. I therefore command you hereafter to call real dogs *kalawana*." And this was done for some time. So, in Nondwane, people proclaimed as taboo the verb *ku phunga*, to sprinkle, and replaced it by *ku kweba*, which means to drink, in order not to offend *Maphunga*. This custom of showing respect by avoiding the use of the name of a chief in connexion with ordinary objects, is even extended to other men, if they are of particular note. So a great personage of the Maputju clan having been named Mahlahla, which means small branches, these had to be called mavinda. The prohibition to pronounce the name of the chief can go so far that even names of deceased chiefs are taboo, at least in the Bilen region. So the petty chief of Rikatla had been called *Muzila* after the great Ngoni chief, son of Manukosi and father of Gungunyana. But people used to call him *Mbozin*, fearing lest the warriors of Bilen might say : "What is this ? Where have you hidden him ? Show us Muzila. We assert that he died long ago!"

171 These are traces of the *hlonipha* custom, which is, however, not so much developed amongst Thongas as amongst Zulus.

643 The law of luma seems to have applied to all kinds of food
207 in former times. Nowadays it is not observed for the following
171 products : maize, Kafir beans and peas, rice, sorghum, water
627 melons (makalabatla) and monkey nuts. It is partly observed
241 for mafureira almonds (tihuhlu), strychnos paste (fuma) and pumpkin leaves (magawane). It is strongly enforced for black Kafir corn and bukanye. Such is at any rate the case in the four clans of Nondwane, Mabota, Ñwamba and Tembe. Amongst the Zulus and Swazis on the contrary, I have been told people luma maize and do not luma kafir corn. Kafir corn is probably the most ancient cereal amongst the Ba-Thonga, and bukanye has always existed in the country. This is perhaps the reason why these luma rites, which bear a very old character, are still applied to these products to the exclusion of other more modern cereals.

I. *The luma without a religious ceremony.*

631 Let us first study the less ritualistic kind of luma, the luma
262 of the *mafureira almond*, for instance. It is practised in each
643 sub-chief's village, and, though it is tending to become obsolete,
527 it is still enforced by some "tihosana." Thus my neighbour in Rikatla, Habele, the hosana placed by Mobvesha over this part of the territory, met some time ago a boy who was eating these almonds, the description of which I shall give later on.— "Who gave them to you ?" asked Habele... The child kept silent.—"Come with me to your parents!" Having found their home, the sub-chief scolded them severely : "You have started sucking (munya) the almonds before us. You wanted to kill my head ? Pay a fine!" They answered : "The birds made them fall from the tree... The children were not guilty!" However they had to pay 500 reis.

262 The luma of almonds, which takes place in December, when
643 they are ripe, is performed in the following way. The almonds
527 are dipped into a small calabash full of water to soften them. Some of the powder of the nyokwekulu is added to them. The headman first takes some for himself and then distributes them to his people. They suck the almonds, take in their hands the part

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643 and pays them regular visits, staying some days in these secondary 545 capitals.

643 But a more effective way of holding the country is to place his son or his near relatives as sub-chiefs in all these districts. 631 If the son is still young, the chief will send along with him a 171 trustworthy counsellor to watch over him. Thus, when he dies, and when the elder son is called to the succession, the new chief will have his brothers as co-chiefs or sub-chiefs. Should they be ambitious, should they have acquired some power during the last years of their father's government, they may refuse to obey and proclaim themselves independent. This has happened many times amongst the Rongas. Let me shortly recapitulate the three instances already mentioned. In the Tembe kingdom Maputju, who "ate the foreleg," made himself king of the greater part of the territory. The separated brothers became fierce enemies and often fought against each other, all the more as Tembe greatly resented the revolt of Maputju, and Maputju knew he had not been fair to his elder brother (p. 329). The same thing happened when Matjolo became independent of Mpfumo, his elder brother ; both were sons of Nhlaruti. The origin of the war of 1894-1896 was the same ; Mubvesha, belonging to the Hlewana branch of the Mazwaya family, wished to become independent... even to take the chieftainship from the elder branch to which Maphunga and his successor Mahazule belonged.

So the Thonga clan has a tendency to fall to pieces, just like the Thonga village, and it requires a good deal of firmness and diplomacy on the part of a chief to keep his kingdom intact.

3) The law of succession.

643 Its main provision is this ; when a chief dies, his elder son is the regular heir, but all his younger brothers must reign before the son, the true heir, is crowned. This system attempts to reconcile two principles which we have already met with as governing the family life : 1) the absolute preeminent right of the elder branch, 2) the community of property amongst brothers.

713 of palm leaves 5 in. and handle 35 ½ inches. As previously
411 mentioned, the handle of the large sized assagai is broken at the
595 warriors' death, being "he," or his defilement ; but the blade
643 "never dies." It belongs to the chief, as does also the shield, and the son will inherit it. During the warrior's life, it is kept in the hut of his *first wife*. She is called the owner (ñwinyi) of the assagai. It is taboo for the other wives to touch it ; another fact which shows the special position of the first wife. (Comp. p. 284.)

713 Another weapon in more restricted use and which can also
411 be employed for cutting wood, is the *axe* or *hatchet*, of which I
439 have met with two descriptions (No. 3) ; the blade (mbimbi) may be narrow and elongated—it is then called shingwatane,—or broad and rounded,—when it is the shiyema. These hatchets are firmly inserted in their wooden handles like the axes of the lake-dwellers. European manufacturers now export a considerable number of semicircular hatchets, similar to the one on the right in my illustration, to Delagoa. The one here portrayed will be at once recognised as being of Native make. I may also mention the big *knives* (mikwa), a sort of sword ; one sometimes meets brawny fellows walking along the paths, armed with these dangerous looking implements! However they are quite inoffensive.

713 I managed to obtain from a traveller a beautiful *dagger* which
411 he was carrying slung across his breast ; it is a rare specimen
171 and comes, I am told, from the Ba-Ndjao tribe (No. 5). The sheath is made of two pieces of wood, artistically carved and fastened together with a plait of iron wire ; it is slightly hollowed out to allow the blade to enter ; this is firmly fixed in the handle through which it passes from end to end, coming out at the extremity, where it is bent back and thus held tightly in place. The Ba-Pedi in the Zoutpansberg also make similar knives.

714 Finally, when the warrior holds in one hand his large assagai,
171 in the other will be found his *shield* (shitlhangu) (No. 1), which he grasps by the stick around which this piece of defensive armour pivots. The Thonga shield is made like that of the Zulus, of a piece of ox-hide, oval in shape and of varying size, sometimes all of one colour and sometimes variegated. (The several battalions

727 the dead body, which remains quite naked ; should the slain be a Pedi wearing the piece of skin called nsindo round his genitalia, the slayer takes it with him as a proof that he has killed a man. A second warrior passing the dying or dead enemy will transfix (hlomula) his arm. A third passing will pierce his leg. These two last have not done so meritorious a deed as the first : they have not slain but merely finished off (huhula) the enemy. They act as witnesses to the first man, who is the actual possessor of the corpse ; they acquire, however, an equal right to dance : they are the *bahlomuri* of the real slayer. Should a fourth man pass by and again stab the dead, he is credited with no glory at all.

171 727 Besides the stabbing in the arm and leg, the dead bodies of enemies are subjected to still further *mutilations* ; they are ripped open and eventually disembowelled, an operation designated by the Zulu word "qanza." This revolting custom seems to be carried out in a more complete way amongst the Ba-Pedi than amongst the Thongas. In the battle of Nov. 6 1901, when the Sikororo and Sekukuni forces were repulsed by Maaghe and Muhlaba at Shiluvane, and forty foes were killed (App. X), their corpses disappeared entirely, cut into pieces by the medicine men of the victorious clan ; magicians from all Zoutpansberg came and asked to buy parts of the slain in order to prepare their powerful charms. In fact, in their opinion, the flesh and blood of an enemy killed in battle is the most efficacious of all charms and makes a *first rate drug* called *marumelo*. This medicine is also used for other purposes : with it the seeds are smeared in order to ensure a good harvest. When the mealies are two feet high, the magician ties together leaves on stems at the four corners of the field, after having treated them with the drug ; the blacksmiths from the Iron Mountain of Zoutpansberg buy it and mix it with their mineral ore, in order to strengthen the iron which they melt in their furnaces (nonisa nsimbi). Without this help they would obtain but slag. The hunters inoculate themselves in the following way with the powder obtained from the tendons and the bones : they make incisions in the skin of their wrists and elbows, draw a little blood, mix it with the drug, cook both in a pot, expose their arrows and assagais to the

789 the medicine of the slayers of men. At bukanye time they can
727 use it to *luma*, viz., to season the first calabash they drink (See
828 page 400). For this purpose it is as good as the great mbhulo,
783 "the medicine of the country," provided by the chief, and it will prevent them attacking their own people under the influence of drink. The *tintebe* will also be helpful in future battles. The insanity which threatens those who shed blood might begin early. So, on the battle-field itself, just after their deed, warriors are given a preventive dose of the medicine by those who have killed on previous occasions and who wear tintebe.

789 The period of seclusion having been concluded by the final
783 purification, all the implements (mizilo) used by the slayers
727 during these days, and their old garments, are tied together and hung by a string to a tree, at some distance from the capital, where they are left to rot (1).

Having reached their homes, the slayers have still to complete the cure by chewing a piece of root called monungwane every morning and evening, and spitting it out in the direction of the rising or the setting sun with the same exclamation : "Phee! phee!" — "Go down, sink!" The piece of root is tied to the assagay (2).

727 The description of the rites performed for the treatment of the slayers
828 applies especially to the Northern clans. But the following narrative
789 of an old man named Makhani from the Rikatla region shows that
783 similar customs were also in existence amongst the Ba-Ronga. This man had wounded an enemy in a battle ; the wound proved fatal and the

(1) I had the good luck to find those which were used for the purification of the slayers after the Mooudi fight during the Sikororo war and they are now in the Ethnographical Museum of Neuchâtel. They consist of half a dozen old calabashes, a pair of sandals, etc.

171 (2) Purification customs for the warriors are somewhat different amongst the Pedis. After the Mooudi battle, the slayers of Maaghe's yimpi had to undergo the following medicinal treatment : the heart of the slain having been torn out, the muscles of their faces sliced off, their limbs amputated, all these portions of human flesh mixed with drugs and ox-flesh were cooked in a pot, the assagais being used to stir the horrible broth. This was poured into a flat basket which it is taboo to touch ; some one drew it with a curved assagay as far as the middle of the square. Then the slayers, having been previously white-washed with clay, advanced on their knees, and, with vociferations or cries imitating vultures, caught a piece of meat in their teeth, not touching it with their hands. Their wives are said to participate in this meal, as being also contaminated by the defilement of their glorious husbands.

831 —I mbolo ya shuburu.
881 —Penis est incircumcisi viri.

Banhwanyana ba ka Makwakwa ba kundja na ba hlanamile. N'yini?

Puellæ ex regione Makwakwa manibus apertis coeunt. Quid significant hæc verba?

—I mahlehlwa.

—Est semen mahlehwa.

(Hlehlwa is the seed of a creeper growing along the ground; this seed [517] is of the same size as a two shilling piece and possesses, in its central part, two hooks standing up.)

[Note 4 (page 88): these are the formulae:

Shana khololwane ma ri tiba le'ri onhaka milebe?

Do you know the bird that injures the labia minora?

—I mbolo ya shuburu.

It is the penis of an uncircumcised man.

Banhwanyana ba ka Makwakwa ba kundja na ba hlanamile. N'yini?

The girls from the region of Makwakwa have intercourse with open hands. What do these words mean?

—I mahlehlwa.

—Mahlehwa is the semen.

(Hlehlwa is the seed of a creeper growing along the ground; this seed [517] is of the same size as a two shilling piece and possesses, in its central part, two hooks standing up.)]

832 "Annotatio quinta (P. 98. 182). Externorum genitalium
836 minora labra verbo milebe (singul. nebe) designantur, quæ
304 puellæ adeo trahere solent ut ea usque ad quinque, decem,
881 etiam quindecim centimetra extendant. Quæ labra nonnunquam
171 parvis baculis metiuntur, eorum longitudine, apud comites suas, immo apud sponsos, gloriantes. Istis pravis moribus enim nihil aliud puellæ sequuntur nisi futuri mariti gratiam, cui apud Ba-Pedi, si sponsam suam labra non satis extendisse arbitratur, eam domum dimittere et boves suos reposcere licet. Puellæaululam pulmenti plenam parant quam operculo claudunt. Ad quas pueri vespere veniunt et stipem dant ut admittantur. In casae solo considunt et puellas cenantes spectant dum digitos in aululam demittunt. Puellæ quarum milebe quatuor digitos longa sunt, quatuor digitis usæ comedunt: bakulu, sunt, i.e. adultæ, et lætantur amatores. Aut tribus tantum, duobus aliquando utantur. Adolescentulæ cavis manibus cenant.

[Note 5 (pages 98 and 182). The labia minora of the outer genitals are called by the word milebe (singular nebe), and the girls are in the habit of pulling them so much that they extend from five or ten to as many as fifteen centimeters.

832 Sometimes the girls measure their labia with small sticks
836 and boast of their length to their companions and even to their
304 bridegrooms. The girls follow these perverse practices for
881 no other reason than for the sake of their future husband.
171 Among the Ba-Pedi the husband may, if he thinks that his bride has not sufficiently stretched her labia, send her home and demand his bulls back. The girls keep a pot full of food ready and cover it with a lid. In the evening the boys come to the girls and give them a small gift in order to be admitted. In the house they sit down on the floor and watch the girls eating from a pot with their fingers. The girls whose milebe are four digits long eat using four fingers: they are bakulu, that is, adult, and they enjoy their lovers. Or they use only three fingers and sometimes two. The young girls eat with the palms of their hands.]

765 "Annotatio sexta (P. 154). Seu quis per ætatem iam pro-
783 vectam imbecillior factus erit, sive qualibet de causa tam
833 impotens ut sperma emittere non possit (a nga kumi mati), ceteri viri quid fiat sciscitabuntur. Quod si utique parum procedit, tota inhibetur cærimonia. Qui vero se invicem eodem ritu miscere debebant, iis ritum conficere non fas est. Ille jejunio, per quinque dies, prout res postulat, artissime utetur, cui medicinæ ad rem accommodatæ exquirentur.

[Note 6 (page 154). If someone should have become feeble because of advanced age, or if for some reason he should be so impotent that he cannot emit sperms (a nga kumi mati), other men ask what should be done. For if it proceeds quite insufficiently, the whole ceremony is held up. And those who should have had intercourse in turn in the same ritual fashion are not permitted to complete the rite. He [the impotent man] has to fast very strictly for five days as the situation requires and the remedies appropriate to the situation will be sought.]

843 "Annotatio septima (P. 154). Nocens maritus uxorque sui
834 purgandi causâ alium ritum peragent. Uxor mariti suaque
841 pudenda veste intima et inquinatissima tergebit, quam postea comburet.

Ambo, ad ignem accedentes, caput manusque calefacient. Inde cinerem collectum mulier adipe miscet, quo mariti artus illinit, digitis bracchiis cruribusque tractis, quod 'lula' dicitur. Postea, noctibus duabus sequentibus, coibunt. Si maritus, non cum uxore sua, sed cum puella quadam ex alio vico, stupri consuetudinem junxerit, huic fossorium donabitur, ut ritum 'lula' perfectum veniat.

[Note 7 (page 154). If the husband and the wife are guilty of an offense, they perform another rite for the sake of purging themselves. The wife will cover her husband's and

But the terrible calamity of drought is brought into direct
relation with some physiological phenomena which no one would 789
have thought of in this connection : the miscarriage of women 821
when the foetus has not been dealt with according to rule, the 843
birth of twins, the death of children not yet received into the tribe 845
by the ceremony of *boha puri* (I. p. 56) and not buried in wet 766
ground ; these are the great natural causes which prevent rain 171
from falling! I have met with this conception all over the
Thonga tribe. I found it also amongst the Pedis of the Trans-
vaal, who firmly believe it, and it would be most interesting to
know if Suthos, Zulus, and Hottentots have the same superstitions. Let me quote the *ipissima verba* of Mankhelu, the great 789
medicine-man of the Nkuna Court. I shall never forget the 821
earnest tone of his voice, his deep conviction, when he uttered 843
to me the following words, as a kind of revelation : "When a 783
woman has had a miscarriage, when she has let her blood flow
secretly and has buried the abortive child in an unknown place,
it is enough to make the burning winds blow, and to dry up all the
land : the rain can no longer fall, because the country is no longer
right (tiko a ra ha lulami). Rain fears that spot. It must stop
at that very place and can go no further. This woman has been
very guilty. She has spoilt the country of the chief, because she
has hidden blood which had not yet properly united to make a
human being. That blood is taboo! What she has done is taboo.
It causes starvation."

"What then must be done?" — "The chief will collect his men and ask them : 'Are you in a normal state?' (lit. are you right?). They answer : 'Such and such a woman was pregnant but nobody knows what she has brought forth.' This woman will be arrested and told to go and show us where she has put it. The earth is dug up ; the hole is sprinkled with a decoction made of two drugs prepared in a special pot, the *mbendula* and *nyangale* ; the woman herself must wash her body every day with that medicine. Then a little of the earth taken from the hole will be scraped up and thrown into the river ; water drawn from the river will be poured into the hole : the country will be well again, and then the rain will come.

"Moreover, we, the medicine-men, after having sent old

accepted another message." That is why men are subject to death. 773 825

This myth is so strongly believed that shepherds, when they see a chameleon climbing slowly up a tree, begin to tease it, and, when it opens its mouth, throw a pinch of tobacco into it, and are greatly amused to see the poor thing change colour, passing from green to orange, and from orange to black, in agony, to the great delight of the little boys ; they thus avenge themselves on the chameleon! (p. 339). 761

The same story[1] is told amongst the Zulus, and other myths of a similar character are found all over Africa, especially amongst the Ba-Rotsi (1). It would be an interesting study to collect them all, and thus to compile the African Genesis. We should probably find that the origin of man and death are the two great subjects on which the imagination of the Bantus has tried to throw some light, and that, though the moral element is strangely lacking in these myths, yet there is a striking resemblance between them and the Biblical story, where an answer to the same questions is given. 171 773

II. *The various human races.*

Have Bantus a clear idea of the human race? What they call *banhu* in Thonga, *bantu* in Zulu, evidently means "black people," the first inhabitants of the country. The Zulus are regarded, owing to their military ability, as a superior race, not however to such an extent as they themselves believe to be the case! Whatever may be their hostility or repugnance to their fellow blacks, they know that they belong to the same species. I am not sure that they hold this idea regarding White people, who are not *banhu* but *balungu*. 609 829

What is the origin of this word? As it is also used in Zulu (abelungo), the etymology suggested is the verb *ku lunga*, to be right, good. White people would then be correct, nice people, to

(1) Compare *Foi et Vie*. Oct. 1910. Les Origines. A. Jalla.

[1] [about the original cause of death. See p. 350, cat. 116-Analyst]

stem *kwemba* is never used, and its meaning is unknown. There is another form, *nkwembu*, of the class mu-mi, very rarely used and having the same meaning, and the word *bukwembu*, the abstract noun derived from the same root. Bukwembu is the "power which creates life and death, which gives riches, or which makes poor," says Viguet. In Pedi the ancestor-gods are called *badimo*, a word which seems to be related to *Khedimo* (above, in heaven). But I have heard this connection doubted (1). In Zulu the etymology of *indhlozi* and *itongo*, employed to designate the ancestor-gods, is also unknown, which is a pity, as it would have been interesting to see if the stem from which they come also means above. Is it not strange that in these three closely-connected languages the terms used for the spirits, about which they have exactly the same ideas, are absolutely without any linguistic relation? In Sutho, these spirits belong to the class "mu-ba," the class of persons, which seems natural. In Zulu their two names are of the class yin-tin and dji-ma, respectively ; in Thonga they belong to the shi-psi class. This dissimilarity is indeed curious.

2) Categories of Ancestor-Gods.

Since every human being becomes a shikwembu after death, there are consequently many categories of these. What is the fate of little children? If they die in infancy no religious ceremony is performed over their grave, nor are any prayers offered to them. The twig rite (I. p. 142) only begins for children who have died at the age of puberty. Infants are, however, seen in the sacred woods amongst the adult gods. This is one of the points about

(1) The Vendas call the ancestor-gods *badzimo*, which is evidently the same word as the Sutho badimo. The Rev. Th. Schwellnus told me he thought that the etymology of this word was the verb dzima (in Thonga tima) which means to extinguish (Timula tora means to quench the thirst). The badzimo would thus be those who bring relief, who remove anguish. As this stem dzimo under various forms is widespread amongst the Bantu tribes to designate the ancestor-gods, it would be interesting to know if the corresponding verb dzima also exists and if this etymology is clearly established. The word *ntima*, sacred wood, in Thonga, may perhaps come from the same root.

The Gods of the Bush, Psikwembu psa Nhoba, are also especially dreaded. There is a little song which is sung as a welcome to travellers who reach their home safely : 776 484 533

Shikwembu sha nhoba shi etlele !
Shi etlele, banhwanyana !
Amadikeo-dikeo-dikeo !
The god of the bush has remained asleep !
He has remained asleep, young girls !
Hurrah ! hurrah ! hurrah !

The spirits of the departed who wander about in the bush, not having been properly buried, try to attack innocent travellers. You are fortunate to escape their anger! For this reason they often say to a relative who is starting out on a journey : "Go with your god," viz., the special ancestor-god who can protect you against the dangers of the bush. 769 776 784

I have also heard mention of *Shikwembu sha tihanye*, the god of quarrels. When an offering prescribed by the bones and presented to a certain ancestor-god has not had the desired result, people say : "This god is a god of quarrels. Let us make an offering to the others so that they may scold him." 776 769

3) The Abode of the Ancestor-Gods and their Mode of Life.

Ideas on these two points are very confused, even contradictory. Some say that the departed go to a great village *under the earth*, a village where everything is white (or pure, "ku basa") ; there they till the fields, reap great harvests, and live in abundance, and they take of this abundance to give to their descendants on earth. They have also a great many cattle. The place where they live seems to be a kind of Hades or Paradise (1). But it would seem, when we consider the funeral rites, that the deceased, on the contrary, 775 776 787

(1) The Ba-Ila (see Smith and Dale, *The Ila-speaking people*, II p. 119) believe that the ghosts go *Kwiwe*, to the East, to Chilenga, the Creator. But they have the same contradictory ideas as the Thongas concerning the abode of their deceased ancestors. 171

Amongst the Natives of Barotseland, on the Zambezi, it is said that the dead go to Nyambe, the God of Heaven. They pierce the lobe of their ears and make other incisions in their bodies as a sign that they belong to Nyambe. When they die and reach the end of the earth at the great river Walamba (the Styx of the Zambezian tribes) the ferryman who conveys the dead to the other bank looks at them to see if

775 remains *in his grave*. Is not his grave his house (I. p. 137)? Does
776 he not sit on his square, where his mats have been unrolled? Thus
787 the life of the shikwembu seems to be the exact continuation of his earthly existence. That such is the idea is proved by the two bones which represent the gods in the set of divinatory bones : 1) the astragalus or nail of an ant-bear, because ant-bears live in the earth, and come out only during the night ; 2) the astragalus of an antelope, found in the excrement of a hyena ; the hyena ate the antelope, and swallowed the bone, which came to light again ; in the same way the gods have been buried in the ground, and reveal themselves later on. (Compare Ch. III. D.) A third idea, more or less intermediate between the other two, is that the gods reside *in the sacred woods*, and there lead their family life in human form, parents and children, even little children, who are carried on their mothers' shoulders. Mboza went so far as to say that they are married and bring forth children, as children are seen on their mothers' backs. Here again, we find the life of the other world regarded as the exact reproduction of this terrestrial existence.

4) The Sacred Woods.

764 These are vast, almost impenetrable thickets, in which the
769 ancient chiefs have been buried ; they are called *ntimu*, (mu-mi)
778 cemeteries. Every clan owns one or more of these burying places. The ntimu is reserved for the men of the royal family, those who have been the owners of the land. They are buried in different sections of the forest, "according to their villages," in such a way that the wood represents separate cemeteries, corresponding to the

171 they bear the marks, and only in that case does he take them to Nyambe (See *Ames primitives*, Th. Burnier, Paris Mission, 102, Boulevard Arago).

The Ba-Chopi believe that their ancestor-gods dwell in rivers. They have no fear of the graves where the deceased have been buried, and even till the ground over them, asserting that the bones alone remain in the earth, the ghosts themselves having departed into the river where they are heard singing, dancing, and playing on antelope horns. When the chiefs make a national offering, they mix the meat with water when they present it to their gods, and the one officiating turns his eyes towards the river when he prays. He places the part of the victim which has been cut out for the gods on the bank of the river, and everybody goes home. The gods come when all have gone and take the offering. It is taboo to remain on the spot and to be seen by them!

778 the ceremony of tying the cotton string (I. p. 56. Sexual relations
782 have been prohibited to her from the birth of her child up to the performance of this rite. She is consequently pure). The chief may penetrate into it, but only if he has abstained from intercourse with his wives for a whole week. Mankentwane himself must observe this law, otherwise the "medicine, muri" would be spoiled and lose all its virtue. (The sexual taboo, in this case, is evidently dictated by the fact that the mhamba is directly connected with military matters, as we shall see. Compare I. p. 470.) In this sacred hut the old woman constantly keeps up a fire which is maintained with the logs of a certain tree, called shibondjwane, cut by the subjects at the command of the chief. Now and again she exposes the skins to the rays of the sun in order to kill the worms which attack them. Should enemies invade the country, she escapes, carrying the bundle in a mat. If they come up with her, she at once disappears (nyumba) leaving the mat on the spot. As soon as an enemy has taken hold of it, he becomes insane ; he begins to wander about in the bush, unable to return home. When the war is over, the old woman goes to the place where she left the mhamba ; if she does not immediately find it there, her heart is not in the least troubled. The bones are thrown, and reveal where the mhamba has been put by the enemy. Two days
778 do not elapse before it is found! The great mhamba is used first
782 of all for the preparation of military expeditions. A small portion
726 of the fingers and of the faces is cut off and these pieces are mixed with the other war charms ; a pill is made and placed on a piece of broken pottery over a fire in the sacred wood. All the warriors pass by one after the other and expose their assegais, their legs, and their faces to the smoke ; finally the great ñanga puts the fire out and the army is ready to start. But the Shirindja mhamba also plays a great part in the National religious ceremonies, as in the other clans (1).

171 (1) It is interesting to compare the Thonga *great mhamba* with two objects found
778 amongst other Bantu tribes. The first of these is the *byiri* of the Pahuins of the French Congo. This is a most powerful fetish consisting of a skull kept in a box in the huts of these people, in a dark corner; it is used as a means of obtaining wealth and of discovering wizards. In former times it is said to have been the skull of the father of the owner of the hut which had been dug up by him and smeared with drugs. In

2) The Main Elements of Ancestor Worship.

The sequence of the religious ceremonies in a typical sacrifice, like that performed at the crushing of the hut, is as follows : 769 782

1) The bones are first consulted, and reveal to what god, when, how, and by whom the sacrifice must be made.

2) The officiant, who is as a rule the eldest male member of the family, comes and presides over the sacrifice.

3) The victims are brought by those who have either been designated, or who have volunteered to provide them.

4) They are killed by the uterine nephews, the goats or sheep by piercing the heart, the hens by cutting the throat. Sometimes the face of the goat is directed to a certain point of the horizon.

5) The victim bleats, or if it is a hen, jumps about on the ground in its agony. At each thrust of the assagay, or of the

order to secure this much desired object as soon as possible, the son would go so far as to poison his father. Now, according to the testimony of Mr. F. Grébert (*Au Gabon*, p. 154), the byeri is not necessarily the skull of an ancestor. Any skull can be used, either that of a traveller found dead on the caravan route or even the skull of a man belonging to a foreign clan who has been assassinated. The byeri, whatever may be its origin, acts by its own power and no longer on account of its connection with the spirit of an ancestor. It is a true fetish, a material, magical object which is able to kill or to enrich in virtue of its own power. The Thonga mhamba is not a fetish. Its power is never dissociated from the spirits of the old chiefs whose nails, hair or faces have been used to produce it. Whatever action it may have is due to the fact that these nails, hair or faces influence the dead chiefs to whom they belonged, according to the magic principle that the part acts on the whole. The origin of the byeri is certainly ancestor-worship, but here ancestrolatry has evolved into fetichism, and I conclude from these facts that Thonga ancestrolatry is simpler, more spiritualistic and must therefore be more ancient than the present Pahuin system. 171 778

Amongst the Ba-Ganda (see Rev. J. Roscoe, *the Baganda*) there are powerful gods who have their priests and mediums, and are worshipped according to a complicated ritual, one of them being the war-god Kibuka. They have their temples, in which there is a sacred shrine placed on a stool. The shrine of Kibuka was secured and sent to the Museum of Ethnology at Cambridge, and it was found to contain, together with other objects, a bag with a human jawbone, the male organ and a decorated umbilical cord. This is a proof that the god Kibuka is an ancestor-god, whatever may be the splendour to which his worship has attained in the course of time. And here again we are in presence of what seems to be a later form of ancestrolatry, most probably evolved in consequence of the development of the social system of the Baganda. They form a nation with a powerful royal family, more than one thousand years old. With them the spirits of the dead kings hover round their jawbones, just as they are influenced by their nails, hair or faces amongst the Thongas, who would seem to be in a less advanced stage of evolution.

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You deceive us, Tshabane!
We have heard Heaven thunder... The roaring will soon come.
We have seen two men who were going to throw the bones with reference to Heaven...
Doubtless you have heard tell of the misfortunes of others:
You will hear them talking of your own!

Enigmatic words, but, with the help of the Natives, I have unravelled their meaning : — You are deceiving us, Tshabane, you who are trying to reassure us. We have heard Heaven. A storm has burst, there was a sudden downpour, a flash of lightning ; Heaven has struck! It has killed some one. Two men passed by, terrified ; they went to consult the bones, to try and find means to ward off these strokes of Heaven. Useless! If you have seen the sorrow of those who mourn, do not imagine that you will escape. It will soon be your turn!

Another song which contains a similar allusion to Heaven as the power which kills, has already been quoted when describing the customs of widowhood (I. p. 207). "What shall we say to thee! King!"

The tale of "the Road to Heaven" (See *Les Chants et les Contes des Ba-Ronga*, p. 237) is also very significant in this respect. It tells the story of a young girl, who, having broken her jar, and fearing a scolding from her mother, *climbs up her string* and goes to Heaven. (Always the same idea of shelter from all evils.) (1) There she finds a village ; a child is given to her, because she is so gentle and obedient. Her sister tries to do the same thing. But she is ill-tempered and wicked. Heaven explodes (baleka), kills her (by lightning), and her bones are blown right to her parents' house. In the tale of the Adventures of Bonawasi (Ch. & C. p. 295) Heaven intervenes to endow a young Native with peculiar wisdom, by means of which he gets the better of the Governor of the town. Possibly some idea of the God of the Europeans may have found its way into the composition of this tale, in which may be recognized certain traces of foreign influence. But this is assuredly not the

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(1) The mention of this string is perhaps due to a tradition common in other African tribes. According to the Ba-Rotse, Leza, God, who dwelt on earth, ascended to Heaven one day by a spider's web. Several human beings tried to climb up the same way, but fell and failed in the attempt. (Comp. A. Jalla, *Foi et Vie*, Oct. 1910.)

goes out of the hut and prays to Heaven in the following words : 845
"Go away! Do not annoy us! We are afraid. Go and roar far 772
away." When the thunderstorm has ended, the child is 821
thanked (1). His mother can also help in the same way, for has 789
she not ascended to Heaven? "She can speak with it, she is at it (or in it) — a li ku djone." (Spoon.)

We find in these rites a striking instance of the combination of the three forms of magic which have been explained above (p. 368). Heaven, rain, lightning, the mother of twins and the twins themselves form a connected whole. Action brought to bear on the mother of twins will therefore have its effect on Heaven ; this is *communionist magic*. This action consists in pouring water over her, (not only in plunging her into a lake). According to the principle of *imitative magic*, Heaven will thus be watered and will pour rain upon the earth. The act of the twin in commanding the lightning to spare the country is a case of *verbal magic*. All this would be logical enough and the conclusions perfectly legitimate if only the premisses were true!

Customs regarding twins vary from one clan to another. While 845
in one tribe they are put to death, in others their advent is considered an event of great happiness. This is the case in *Tembe and Maputju*, where women are said to wish for twins, and, if certain mothers have enjoyed this piece of good fortune, others ask them for some of the fat with which they have smeared their bodies, hoping by the use of the same ointment to obtain a like happy result. The hut is never burnt. The mother gives birth to the twins behind the hut (fukwen, I. p. 37). When it is time for her to re-enter her domicile, a hole is made in the wall at the back. The husband is excluded from the hut till the day of presentation to the moon (a ceremony which, in these clans, is not omitted in the case of twins). When he is again admitted, his wife strikes his legs with a stick, in order "to cure him" (ku mu

(1) Mrs. Junod, who was for years a missionary amongst the Faŋ or Pahouin of the French Congo, told me that, one day, after a tornado, the rainbow suddenly appeared in the sky. One of her female pupils at once ran to her, and hid her face in her schoolmistress' lap. On asking the reason of this fear the teacher was told that this girl was a twin, and twins dare not look at the rainbow. So the connection between Heaven and twins exists also in this tribe of Western Africa. 171

"Balungwana ba tlanga henhla" — "The balungwana are at play up there." Or it is they who are singing in heaven when there is a prolonged roar of thunder, saying : "wuwu-wuwu!" 772 776 821

When some one passes along the road, they dispute up above as to who he may be. One says : "It is so and so," and the others contradict him. Then they spit on the traveller, who is quite astonished to see some saliva on his hand. He mistakes it for rain, and looks up to the sky to see where the rain is coming from. The balungwana then have a chance to see his face, and the one who has guessed rightly says to the others : "You see! I was right."

In Bilen I heard of a man who prevented children from picking the beautiful red flowers of Tecoma capensis, telling them that the balungwana wanted them for dresses. The same individual believed that these little men would bring oxen to him. 772 776

The Rongas say that a little man fell on the hill of Lourenço Marques, near the house of Sithini, the son of Mashaken, just before the famous war between Mozila and Mawewe (I. p. 28), the rival claimants to the kingdom of Gaza, and that this dwarf came as a presage of the troubles which were to follow. "Lots of folk saw him" said Charlie in 1895 ; (he was then a man of some forty years of age). "We were too young to be allowed to look at him ; the Whites took him and carried him off to Mozambique." — Heaven is therefore inhabited. This is generally admitted, but the idea, from all that one can gather, remains very vague.

C. CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THONGA RELIGION.

I. *The Origin of the Conception of Heaven.*

Ancestrolatry forms a clear, well-defined religion, with its theology (i. e., the ideas as regards the psikwembu), its sacrifices, and its prayers. The dim, mysterious ideas about Heaven, incorporated in or rather lying behind some of the most extraordinary rites of the tribe, bear a very different character. There is something incoherent, vague and 771 772 776 171

771 unexpected in them, and it would seem that, bearing as they do an
772 essentially deistic character, and accompanied by no true worship, they
776 might as well be absent from the horizon of the Thonga mind.

171 However, when we study other Bantu tribes, we come to exactly the opposite conclusion, i. e., that it would be indeed strange if no religious ideas of this kind were found amongst our tribe. In fact, this occurrence of a double set of religious ideas is universal amongst Bantus. They all believe in a kind of Supreme Being, an All-Father, who bears many different names, *Nzame* amongst the Fan and a great number of West African tribes, *Nyambe* amongst the Ba-Rotsi, *Leza* in some Zambezi and Rhodesian districts, *Mulungu* amongst fifteen East African tribes (1), *Unkulunkulu* in Zululand, *Nungungulu* round Inhambane, and *Mudimo* amongst the Ba-Sutho, etc., etc. The Thonga *Tilo* is, most likely, one of these names. The word probably comes from the root *ulu*, high, elevated, and *ilu*, heaven, which the Rev. P. Sacleux has found with that meaning amongst Central or West African tribes. (*Mulu*, amongst the Bembas ; *Liulu*, in Kimbundu ; *Diulu*, in Luba ; *Wilu*, in Luyi ; *Egulu* in Ganda ; *Idjulu*, amongst the Tongas of Zambezi, etc.). This root, with the personal prefix, has given birth to the term *Mugulu*, designating God in Tabwa and *Mukuru* in Herero. It may be that Mukuru is rather related to the *Unkulunkulu* of the Zulus, the Great One. (See Mgr. Le Roy, "La Religion des Primitifs," 1909, p. 498.)

In the South African tribes, however, the conception of the Supreme Being is not nearly so precise as in most parts of Central Africa. The Thonga Tilo, although sometimes invoked, is hardly a being, but seems rather to be a personification of Nature. Is this the original conception of the Supreme Being, or is it rather a transformation of this? I abstained, in *Les Ba-Ronga*, from expressing any definite opinion on this point. Further study has now led me to believe that the latter conclusion is the more probable, and that ideas concerning Heaven were more definite in former times. This, at any rate, is also the conviction of intelligent elderly Natives, who are able to remember the former ideas held by the tribe. They say : "As regards death, people now commonly affirm that it is caused by witchcraft, whilst formerly they attributed it to the agency of Heaven." Let us also notice the name of the dwarfs who are believed to inhabit Heaven, the *balungwana*. This word is a

(1) Comp. J. Torrend's *Comparative Grammar of the S. A. Bantu Languages*, p. 68.

diminutive of *Mulungu*, *balungu*, by which are designated, amongst the Zulus and Thongas, White people of every description, whether Europeans or Asiatics. Could the inhabitants of Heaven have been called "balungwana," on account of their resemblance to the Whites? It would hardly seem probable, for the name of the balungwana, and the ideas connected with them, were in existence long before White people were generally known, or had settled in the country. It is much more reasonable to suppose that the name of these mythical beings, as also that by which the Whites are designated, is a derivative of some other pre-existent term ; and what should this be if not the famous vocable "Mulungu," which stands for God, the One Supreme God, in so many of the Bantu dialects of East Africa, from Lake Victoria Nyanza to the Zambesi, to Senna and Quilimane? I should be inclined to think that the tribes in the neighbourhood of Delagoa were also acquainted with this name, which is so widely known, and that it has, in the course of centuries, disappeared from their theology, only leaving, as a last trace, the term balungwana, applied to the heavenly beings who occasionally descend to earth, and balungu, designating that superior race whose wisdom has always impressed the Blacks as supernatural. If this hypothesis were confirmed, we should have the right to conclude that the idea of Heaven, such as it is described in this chapter, is the disfigured remnant of a higher and monotheistic conception, held by the primitive Bantus before their dispersion, which has evolved in various ways amongst the different tribes.

II. *The Antiquity of Ancestrolatry.*

Ancestor Worship seems, on the other hand, to be an extremely ancient religion amongst mankind. There have been discovered of late years sepulchres of prehistoric date, which seem to show that the funeral rites of the first races were very similar to those practised by the Bantus of the present day. In comparing the burial of Sokis (I. p. 139) with that of a human being of the Mousterian age, whose remains were recently discovered by Hauser in the celebrated "Abri du Moustier" (Dordogne) (1) I noticed the following resemblances :

(1) See my paper "Deux enterrements à 20,000 ans de distance." *Anthropos*, 1900, I. v. Comp. also *L'homme préhistorique*. January, 1909.

171 769 1) In both cases, the corpse was treated with great, even affectionate care, protected against the earth, and provided with a pillow.

2) The legs and arms had been bent towards the body, a custom widespread amongst primitive races, and directly due to the belief in an after-life.

3) The deceased is regarded as sleeping : hence the pillow provided for him.

4) His after-life is believed to be an exact continuation of his existence on earth. Hence the fact that the articles which he was accustomed to use are put on to, or inside, his grave, the mats, rugs, mug in one case, and silex or "coups de poing" in the other.

5) If the rites performed for Sokis may be explained by the hypothesis that he has become a *shikwembu*, a god endowed with divine powers, if they are in truth acts of worship, it is but reasonable to suppose that the same religious conceptions gave birth to the similar rites of the Mousterian Primitives. The Mousterian Age is one of the first periods of the Quaternary. Some palaeontologists believe it to be anterior to the last glacial period, and think that the dwellers in la Dordogne lived 20,000, even 50,000 years ago! They possessed, then, a religion, and this religion was probably Ancestrolatry.

III. *The Relation between Ancestrolatry and the Conception of Heaven.*

769 772 776 The conclusion which may be drawn from the two preceding paragraphs is that both Ancestor Worship and the Conception of a Supreme Being are of very ancient date, and the question naturally arises as to which is the older. I do not pretend here to be able to supply a solution to this great problem, but merely to draw the attention of my readers to the following facts.

1) When questioned as to the relative antiquity of their two sets of religious ideas, Thongas reply that they are unable to give an answer. Their conception of Heaven is so impersonal that they cannot draw any comparison between the two. Their neighbours, the Swazis and the Zulus, however, are very decided upon this point. The Rev. W. Challis, in *The East and the West* of July, 1908, summarises their statements as follows :

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
South African Natives FX5
Thonga FTb

are conspicuously absent from the tribes of the Northern Transvaal. Military organization is interwoven with many aspects of Nguni life and has left its stamp upon the people. Their age organization, much stronger and stricter than that of the Sotho, has by its association with the regimental system a military character; enrolment into a regiment is an important step in the life of each individual; strengthening of the army forms an important part of the yearly first-fruit ceremonies, while the Zulu even had military villages in which the men spent much of their time. All this is absent from the Lowveld where war never involved more than one or two regiments in what was little more than skirmishes for cattle, and the chief weapons, the bow and arrow, supplemented by spear and battle-axe, made fighting at close quarters unusual.

The South-eastern tribes, as also the Shangana–Tonga, have a much greater sense of display than is found among Sotho generally. To the young Zulu who spends his days courting the girls, dress and general appearance have an absorbing interest that is not found among northern Sotho; the beautiful regimental dress of Zulu and Swazi has no Sotho counterpart; doctors do not dress up to distinguish themselves from others; the Sotho bride who goes to her husband's kraal fully covered in a blanket has little wedding finery; while Sotho dancing lacks the dramatic and spectacular qualities of Nguni dances. In Sotho culture there is no place for the *giya*-ing, jumping, and shouting one's own praises in public, that plays so prominent a part in Zulu society. Nor does song among the Sotho, who like all Bantu are musical, occupy quite the same important position as among Nguni, where every child has its lullaby, every wedding new songs specially composed for the occasion, and every sib its praise song.

The Shangana–Tonga of the Lowveld fall midway between the culture of Zulu–Xhosa and that of the Northern Transvaal Sotho. Cattle in their society play no greater part than among Sotho; they have no milk taboos; in their agriculture they hardly differ from the Sotho except in having had one or two different crops which they are said to have introduced among Sotho. They are not strongly patrilineal like Zulu–Xhosa, the mother's side of the family plays as important a part as among Sotho in social life and religion, but they have no female

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priestesses and their joking relationship between a man and his mother's brother is not found in Sotho society.

Like the Zulu–Xhosa, the Shangana–Tonga have no marriage with relatives, while they differ from both Zulu and Sotho in allowing inheritance of the mother's brother's wife. Women do not marry women in Shangana–Tonga society; their sexual rites associated with the moving of a village have no parallel elsewhere. The religious system of Shangana–Tonga resembles that of the Sotho more than it does the Zulu–Xhosa in the use of shrines and beer offerings, but the sacred drum cult is absent and the use of fowls in sacrifice has its parallel among southern Lowveld tribes only. Their smelling-out doctor, whose methods resemble those of the doctor in Zulu–Xhosa society, is not found among Sotho, but the ordinary bone-thrower hardly differs from the Sotho doctor either in methods or initiation. Of the northern Sotho initiation schools, only the *khoba* and circumcision school are found among Shangana–Tonga, while Shangana–Tonga love of display, manner of dancing and singing resembles that of the Zulu–Xhosa. The similarities between Shangana–Tonga and the Sotho of the Lowveld are to be accounted for more by common influences in the past than by recent borrowings, though there is a considerable amount of diffusion to-day. The Shangana–Tonga of the Northern Transvaal Lowveld are very mixed: one tribe, that of Muhlava, came originally from Zululand, settling in its present habitat after a sojourn in Portuguese East Africa; others, like that of Nwamitwa who belongs to the great Valoyi family, trace their origin to the Nyai country beyond the Limpopo whence they came southwards towards the Tonga.

Peaceful conditions, closer contacts between members of different tribes in the service of the white man, subjection to a uniform system of European law and administration which calls forth similar responses among different tribes, all are tending towards gradual elimination of marked tribal differences and greater uniformity in tribal custom and conditions. To-day the old Venda initiation schools have all but died out while Sotho schools are rapidly spreading into Vendaland; Christian missions are exerting similar influences among different tribes; young men returning from work in towns bring home everywhere a changed attitude towards tribal customs and morality and a more